

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

TRSE-00 SAJ-01 /059 W

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R 141250Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9001

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

CONFIDENTIAL MADRID 1177

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: PP OFFICIAL ON THE PP CONGRESS, GENERAL POLITICAL TOPICS

REF: MADRID 979

1. IN A RECENT CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF A PARTIDO
POPULAR OFFICIAL CLOSE TO PIO CABANILLAS SAID THE ELECTION
OF PARTY OFFICIALS, SURELY THE MOST IMPORTANT ACTION
TAKEN BY IN THE RECENT PARTY CONGRESS (REFTEL), HAD
WORKED OUT JUST ABOUT RIGHT FOR PARTY INTERESTS. THE
PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS REPRESENTED THE PRINCIPAL PARTY
CURRENTS, EMILIO ATTAR FOR THE REGIONAL GROUPS, JOSE LUIS
ALVAREZ FOR TACITO, AND JUAN ANTONIO ORTEGA FOR "HIS OWN
SUI GENERIS CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY." (ORTEGA, ALSO A TACITO
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FIGURE, IS CLOSE TO FOREIGN MINISTER OREJA). AS FOR THE TOP
TWO, HE SAID, "PIO IS PIO AND AREILZA IS AREILZA."

2. THERE WAS AGREEMENT BEFOREHAND THAT CABANILLAS WOULD
BE PRESIDENT, WITH AREILZA RECOGNIZING CABANILLAS' MORE
ACTIVE ROLE IN THE FORMATION OF THE PARTY AND CONFIDENT
THAT TAKING THE SECOND SLOT WOULD NOT DIMINISH EITHER

HIS STATURE OR HIS VISIBILITY. AREILZA TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT HE HAD PREFERRED CABANILLAS AS PRESIDENT. IN THIS WAY CABANILLAS WOULD HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEGOTIATING WITH THE GOVERNMENT, WHILE HE (AREILZA) WOULD BE FREER FOR POLITICAL CONTACTS AND FOREIGN TRAVEL. NONETHELESS, WE JUDGE THERE WAS A RELUCTANCE WITHIN THE PP AND AMONG THE GOVT MINISTERS (OSORIO, OREJA, ET AL) TO HAVE AREILZA IN THE TOP SLOT AND THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY UNCOMFORTABLE WITH AREILZA AS HEAD OF THE PP, REMEMBERING ALL THE BAD THINGS AREILZA SAID ABOUT HIM BEFORE POLITICAL REALITIES MOVED AREILZA TOWARDS A RECONCILIATION.

3. THE OFFICIAL EXPRESSED FLAT OPPOSITION TO THE IDEA THAT THE NEW CORTES SHOULD SIMPLY WRITE A NEW CONSTITUTION AND THEN QUICKLY DISSOLVE ITSELF FOR NEW ELECTIONS, NOTING THAT THE COUNTRY COULD ILL AFFORD TWO GENERAL ELECTIONS WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD, ESPECIALLY WITH ECONOMIC MEASURES SO DESPERATELY NEEDED. HE REJECTED THE IDEA AS ONE BEING PUSHED BY THE PSOE BECAUSE IT KNOWS IT WILL LOSE THE NEXT ELECTIONS, CANNOT SAY SO OUT LOUD, AND THUS NEEDS TO SPREAD THE THOUGHT THAT OTHER ELECTIONS WOULD FOLLOW SHORTLY. IN FACT THE IDEA IS FAR FROM LIMITED TO THE PSOE, BEING SHARED BY SOME SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT, SOME CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, INCLUDING FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ, WHO RECENTLY JOINED THE PP-LED CENTRO DEMOCRATICO. (THE PP, WHICH EXPECTS TO DO BEST IN THE NEXT ELECTIONS, ALSO HAS PRAGMATIC REASONS FOR WANTING THE NEXT

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CORTES TO ENDURE.)

4. WHAT WAS MOST NEEDED, IN THE OFFICIAL'S VIEW, WAS A WAY FOR SUAREZ TO RUN FOR OFFICE: HE NOW STOOD SO FAR ABOVE ANY OF HIS MINISTERS THAT THE SITUATION WAS REMINISCENT OF FRANCO TWENTY YEARS AGO. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF SOME ONE (SUCH AS AREILZA) WERE TO BE ELECTED TO THE CORTES WITH A SUBSTANTIAL VOTE AT THE HEAD OF A GROUP WITH APPRECIABLE REPRESENTATION IN THE CORTES, IT WOULD TEND TO PLACE THAT LEADER (BACKED BY THE PEOPLE) IN OPPOSITION TO SUAREZ (BACKED BY THE KING), A SITUATION TO BE AVOIDED. THE OFFICIAL NOTED THERE WERE VARIOUS POSSIBLE WAYS FOR SUAREZ TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMIZATION, INCLUDING INSERTING HIMSELF IN THE CORTES RACE AT THE LAST MINUTE. THE MODALITIES, OF COURSE, DEPENDED ON HOW THE ELECTORAL LAW CAME OUT. (IN OUR VIEW, THE CENTRO DEMOCRATICO, WITH THE PP IN THE LEAD, STANDS TO DO WELL IN ANY EVENT, BUT WOULD UNDENIABLY DO BETTER WITH SUAREZ ON ITS TICKET.)

5. REGARDING THE PCE, THE OFFICIAL REITERATED HIS THOUGHT THAT "AN ILLEGAL PCE IS A PROBLEM FOR ALL OF US, A LEGAL ONE IS A PROBLEM ONLY FOR THE PSOE." LEGALIZATION OF THE PCE, HE THOUGHT, WOULD ALSO HAVE THE UTILITY OF PUSHING THE PSOE BACK TOWARD ITS NATURAL CONSTITUENCY, THE NON-COMMUNIST LEFT, AND AWAY FROM RADICALIZATION. THE OFFICIAL ALSO BELIEVED THAT JURIDICAL APPRECIATION OF THE PCE'S LEGALITY WOULD UPHOLD IT: ALTHOUGH THE CORTES HAD SOUGHT TO COME UP WITH A PHRASE IN THE LAW AIMED DIRECTLY AT THE PCE, THE PHRASE, HE THOUGHT, WAS SIMPLY NOT APPLICABLE. (IT BARS ASSOCIATION WHICH, "SUBMITTED TO AN INTERNATIONAL DISCIPLINE, PROPOSE TO IMPLANT A TOTALITARIAN SYSTEM").

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 14-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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